Western Michigan University

Kalamazoo, MI • Public School



The most comprehensive guide to free speech on campus — anywhere

Because a true university education requires freedom of expression.

The College Free Speech Rankings are based on student surveys, campus policies, and recent speech-related controversies.





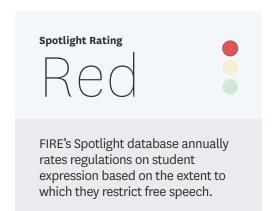


Overview

Western Michigan University ranks 168 out of 257 schools in the 2026 College Free Speech Rankings with a score of 56. The university climbed 25 places from last year, a modest gain that coincided with its decision to adopt institutional neutrality. Even so, WMU still earns a "red light" Spotlight rating.

The school ranks in the top 50 on "Self-Censorship," indicating that more students feel they can speak freely.

WMU could make immediate progress by revising its restrictive speech policies to earn a "green light" Spotlight rating and by adopting the Chicago Statement.



If you are a school administrator and would like to discuss your rating, reach out to speechcodes@thefire.org.

Visit our website: https://rankings.thefire.org/ for more information.





31% of students say they have self-censored on campus at least once or twice a month.



73% of students say shouting down a speaker to prevent them from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.



37% of students say using violence to stop someone from speaking on campus is acceptable, at least in rare cases.

1.41:1

There are roughly 1.41 liberal students for every one conservative student.

Institutional Neutrality

ADOPTED



Chicago Statement for Free Speech

NOT ADOPTED



SCORE DEEP DIVE

COMFORT EXPRESSING IDEAS



▲ INCREASE

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT



▼ DECREASE

OPENNESS



▲ INCREASE

SELF-CENSORSHIP



▼ DECREASE

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT



▲ INCREASE



DECREASE

SCHOLARS UNDER FIRE



STUDENTS UNDER FIRE



DEPLATFORMINGS



